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## More on the Daniloff Arrest

**A** COUPLE OF days ago we said in this space that the detention of U.S. News & World Report Moscow correspondent Nicholas Daniloff was an outrage. It still is—and if anything more of one. Mr. Daniloff, who was framed by the KGB in a crude and phony "espionage" transaction, immediately seized by eight men and subsequently jailed, has now spent several days in detention. He should be released at once.

Some truly disturbing themes have been developing in relation to Nick Daniloff's incarceration. A lot of people are sending the same insidious message to the Ayatollah Gorbachev that was sent to the Ayatollah Khomeini, an earlier and rather more splashy hostage-holder. It is being said, for instance, that so long as Mr. Daniloff is held Americans will get a wrong—i.e., "bad"—impression of the Russians and that his jailers thus ought to let him go in order to dispel any such impression.

This is a piece of fatuity that can hardly be expected to help make the Soviet authorities understand what a grave offense they have committed. It is a nursery-school admonition, a transparent bit of cajoling that does neither our intelligence nor our seriousness of purpose any credit. We in this country know who and what the Soviets are; we know where our own interests intersect theirs and where these interests are fundamentally opposed. We have no call to feign "disillusion" or to pretend that because of this entrapment of a journalist we now understand

something about our adversary that we never understood before. We need to tell them that we understand exactly what they have done, that they have violated the accepted rules of engagement and that there will be a price for holding Mr. Daniloff.

The sounds coming out of our government over the past few days have not been clear on this. Between Santa Barbara and Washington the publicly and privately conveyed message sometimes seems to be that this country will not let Mr. Daniloff's detention get in the way of its business-as-usual with the Soviets, other times that it wants him released at once *so that* joint business can be conducted.

We truly hope this second reading is the right one and that the government will not just settle into a posture of long suffering resignation. We also call attention to the perils of all this easy talk, in and out of government, about a swap. That may turn out to be the only way of getting Mr. Daniloff freed. But it needs to be faced up to that such an arrangement would carry a price of its own: the declaration of American overseas journalists fair game for a government wanting to get one of its apprehended spies back and—despite whatever disclaimers would attend it—the stigmatizing of a journalist as a spy, the equating of Mr. Daniloff with a Soviet espionage agent. The U.S. government and the journalistic profession both have reason to make Nick Daniloff's release their urgent, priority business.